

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A combination of ~~a foaming agent and a molten metal used for manufacturing a foamed or porous metal, the combination comprising:~~

~~a mixture of foaming agent including a foamable powder; and~~

~~a coating layer of SiO_2 covering the particle surfaces of the powder; and~~

~~a molten metal.~~

2. **(Previously Presented)** The combination according to claim 1, wherein the powder is of a carbonate.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The combination according to claim 2, wherein the carbonate is CaCO_3 or MgCO_3 .

4. **(Currently Amended)** The combination according to claim 2, wherein the carbonate is MgCO_3 .

5. **(Previously Presented)** The combination according to claim 1, wherein the molten metal is molten aluminum.

6. **(Currently Amended)** A ~~method of foaming agent used for manufacturing a foamed or porous metal, the method comprising:~~

~~preparing a foamable powder of MgCO_3 ; and having a coating layer of SiO_2 covering the particle surfaces of the foamable powder;~~

~~adding the foamable powder as a foaming agent into a molten metal, wherein heat from the molten metal gasifies the foamable powder; and~~

cooling the molten metal to yield the foamed or porous metal, wherein the foamed or porous metal includes a plurality of pores formed from gasification of the particles of the foamable powder.